(a) the details of efforts being made by Government for the cultivation of world level quality cotton in the country;

(b) whether Government propose to establish a Cotton Research Centre in the country; and

(c) in what manner, the information about good quality varieties of cotton is transmitted to cotton flowers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) Under the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), the Central Institute for Cotton Research (CICR), All India Coordinated Cotton Improvement Project (AlCCIP) and Central Institute for Research on Cotton Technology (CIRCOT) undertake research and testing for commercial release of world level quality cotton varieties and hybrids in the country. In addition, the Centrally sponsored Technology Mission on Cotton further strengthens various activities to improve cotton production, productivity and quality through Union Ministries of Agriculture and Textiles.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Farmers are provided information through Krishi Vigyan Kendras, frontline demonstrations in farmers' fields and training of farmers after which the State Extension Machinery takes over the work of extension.

Drought in Karnataka

470. SHRI KB. KRISHNAMURTHY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it has come to the notice of Government that out of 176 taluks, 98 recorded below normal rainfall in Karnataka;

(b) if so, whether the Karnataka Government had sent any Memorandum seeking fresh assistance from Government;

(c) if so, the amount of financial assistance, sought for;

(d) whether any Central Team has been sent to the State and if so, whether the team has submitted its report; and

(e) the amount, if any, released to the State in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) to (e) According to India Meteorological Department (IMD), 6 out of 27 meteorological districts in Karnataka received deficient rainfall during South-West Monsoon 2004 (1.6.2004 to 30.9.2004). The State Government has declared 80 out of 176 taluks as drought affected during the current year after July, 2004.

In response to the Memorandum seeking assistance from National Calamity Contingency Fund (NCCF) and foodgrains for relief employment from the Special Component of Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana (SGRY), an Inter-Ministerial Central Team visited the State for assessment of the situation. On its recommendations, the High Level Commitee (HLC) has approved Rs. 83.67 crores from NCCF, subject to adjustment of balance available in the Calamity Relief Fund (CRF) of the State and 1.14 lakh MTs of foodgrains free of cost, under the Special Component of Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana (SGRY), for relief employment works. The value of the foodgrains exceeds Rs. 1.30 crores. The entire Central share of CRF for 2004-05 amount to Rs. 67.98 crores has also been released to the State.

MSP for cotton

471. SHRI RAJU PARMAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Minimum Support Price (MSP) announced by the Cotton Corporation of India (CCI) for cotton is remunerative for the farmers;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the details of the mechanism to work out the MSP;

(c) whether the MSP is reviewed periodically and if so, the details thereof; and